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Syllabus: Social Mission Enterprises

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PUBPADM 497 Social Mission Enterprises

Spring 2017

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Class Meeting Time: Tues/Thurs. 2:30-3:45
Class Location: New Africa House, Room 311



Course Description

This course is for students who dream of starting, running, or working for a social mission enterprise---an organization that meets a specific social mission, makes a financial profit, and considers the environmental and personal impacts of its actions. In this class, students will take initial steps towards creating a fictional social mission enterprise, with practicing social entrepreneurs acting as mentors. Students will also complete a project that will help solve an issue facing the social enterprise with which their mentor is affiliated.

The course begins with a discussion of the issues around which students hope to pursue change and of ways to address those issues. We then discuss personal leadership styles and team building skills, both of which are essential components of any successful social enterprise. Students will then begin to shape their own social enterprises, using design thinking, Lean Startup methodologies, impact measurement, and budget development skills that they are learning in the course. Students will also be exposed to the legal structures within which social mission enterprises can exist, and they will develop oral and written communication skills that are essential to any successful social mission enterprise.

Objectives:

Students who successfully complete this course will be able to:

- Demonstrate leadership and team building skills
- Analyze complex social issues
- Design “enterprise” solutions to address social issues
- Measure the financial and social impacts of social mission enterprises
- Develop a budget for a social mission enterprise
- Apply design thinking skills to social problems
- Understand how personal skills and values can inform and shape social mission enterprises
- Identify and understand their own values and the values of social enterprises
- Work well with professionals who aim to achieve social goals
- Write clearly and persuasively
- “Pitch” ideas to potential investors

Class Values

It is impossible to create and run a successful social enterprise unless the people in that organization practice the values inherent in all social enterprises—honesty, respect, equality, empathy, etc. We expect everyone in the class to practice these values as we interact with each other and with our mentors. A critical value in this class is that of confidentiality. Some students may reveal personal experiences, and your mentors may share confidential information about their organizations. None of this should be repeated outside class.

Another class belief, if not value, is that we learn best from our mistakes. The class will give us ample opportunity to “fail fast and fail forward,” and I hope we will all learn to do so graciously and to support our classmates if they trip while trying something new (or old).

Class Meetings and Class Participation

We will meet Tuesdays and Thursdays from 2:30 to 3:45 p.m. between Jan. 24 and May 2. Classes will not meet on March 14 or 16 (spring break) or April 18 (make-up for Patriot’s Day).

The success of this class depends on your classroom participation, both as an individual and as part of a team. You are expected to attend class and participate regularly. I keep track of attendance, your willingness to talk in class and the quality of the discussion, and whether you are distracting yourself and others by using phones or computers for non-class activity. I consider discussion questions, homework, and “in the news” postings as part of class participation, so you don’t have to panic if you are painfully shy, but I hope you will find yourself comfortable enough to participate orally.

Assignments

Each class, students will read articles that have been posted on Moodle. Most classes, you will also complete a homework exercise that helps you learn tools for building a successful social enterprise or answer a reflective question that helps you understand your personal growth through this experience.

In the middle of the semester students will prepare two interim reports—one for the fictional social enterprise they are creating and one for the project they are completing for their mentors. The final reports will revise and add to the mid-semester reports.

At the end of the semester, students will share their research findings with their mentors and “pitch” their fictional social enterprise idea to a panel of impact investors. They will also prepare individual reflective essays.

Grading:

The individual work in this class will count for 50% of your grade, and the teamwork for the other 50%. Individual work includes class participation, homework, and individual reflective essays. The teamwork includes the interim and final reports for the client, as well as the interim and final description of the imaginary social enterprise your group is creating.

Topics of Discussion

UNIT ONE: Intro to SMEs and their Leaders—You!

Jan. 24: Introduction:

Jan. 26: Understanding the Issues in all their complexities

Jan.28: Brainstorming Solutions

Feb. 2: Leadership and teamwork

UNIT TWO: STARTING THE SME AND TESTING YOUR IDEAS

Feb. 7: Lean Start-Up, Developing & Testing a Solution

Feb. 9: The Social Business Model Canvas: Introduction

Feb. 14

Social Business Model Canvas, Continued.

Key activities, resources, partners

Feb. 16: Measuring Social & Environmental Success: Impact Measurement

Feb. 21: Reconciling Impact Measurement with SBMC

UNIT THREE: REFINING IDEAS WITH OTHER TOOLS AND SKILLS

Feb. 23: Design Thinking

Feb. 28: Cultural Humility

March 2: MEET WITH MENTORS AT TIME AND PLACE CONVENIENT FOR STUDENTS AND MENTORS

March 7: Telling the Social Enterprise's Story

March 9: Interim Reports Due

UNIT FOUR: THE MONEY SIDE OF THINGS

March 21: Completing the SMBC, Revenue Streams, Cost Structure, Profit

March 23: Budgets

March 28: Where Will You Find this Money?

UNIT FIVE: LEGAL STRUCTURES FOR THE SME

March 30: Traditional FP

April 4: Traditional NP

April 6: Benefit corporations

April 11: L3C

April 13: Cooperatives

April 18: NO CLASS

April 20: Review

UNIT SIX: PRESENTATIONS

April 25: Practice

April 27: Two of the Teams

May 2: The other 2 teams